



**State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services**

Jim Doyle, Governor
Karen E. Timberlake, Secretary

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STATEWIDE HEALTH IT NETWORK PLAN GETS FINAL APPROVAL

Organizations to Begin Implementing the Plan in Early 2011

MADISON— The development of a statewide network of electronic health information is moving ahead after Wisconsin's plan received final approval this week from federal officials. The Wisconsin Statewide Health Information Network (WISHIN) will serve as the network's governing organization and the Wisconsin Health Information Exchange (WHIE) will act as the network's technical manager and provide early stage technical assistance to health care providers and hospitals that want to participate in information exchange.

Wisconsin providers are expected to receive between \$500 million and \$800 million in federal incentive payments to help health care providers with the cost of implementing or upgrading electronic health records systems.

"We can now make the statewide exchange of medical information a reality, helping our health care providers access the right information at the right time and provide the very best care for their patients," said Karen Timberlake, Department of Health Services Secretary. "This is another critical part of Wisconsin's efforts to make constant improvements in health care quality for all state residents."

With secure information exchange, more health care providers will be able to receive clinical care summaries about patients they are treating that are sent electronically by providers not associated with the same clinic or health system. They can also receive electronic lab results. Research has shown that these steps reduce medical errors, improve care outcomes and save time for clinicians and patients.

WISHIN is a non-profit organization formed by the Wisconsin Hospital Association, the Wisconsin Health Information Organization, the Wisconsin Collaborative for Health Care Quality and the Wisconsin Medical Society. WHIE is a non-profit membership organization that works to develop and promote health information exchange technology and services to improve coordination of care and population health.

"We are very pleased to be moving forward in the development of this health information exchange," said Wisconsin Medical Society CEO Susan L. Turney, MD, WISHIN board of directors chair. "In Wisconsin, we have worked hard to be recognized consistently as a national leader in health care quality. Creating this statewide information exchange is another positive step we believe can advance the high quality care we are able to provide for patients across Wisconsin."

Wisconsin is receiving a total of \$9.4 million for the development and implementation of its health information exchange plan as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

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